

1/24/20

Selectmen's Minutes January 3, 2005 6:30 P.M.

Present: F. Dore' Hunter, Peter Ashton, Robert Johnson (late), Walter Foster, (left at 8:30), Trey Shupert, Absent, Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. Meeting was televised.

CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

Ann Chang asked that the Ballot for the Override be processed at the same time as the Town Election. She felt it would not be orderly with at least 9 budgets presented to the Meeting. She felt that Board of Selectmen would have to get the education started and said she thought they would have many volunteers to assist them in this process.

SEWER COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

No Sewer Issues

PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS

OPERATIONAL MINUTE - Don spoke about the budget presentation that will be presented later on tonight. He further spoke about the snow storm on the 6th and the accidents that took place. The Police Chief has notified them of an attack upon a woman outside her home on Newtown Road and asked the citizens to keep watch of their surroundings.

SEPTIC MANAGEMENT LOAN PROGRAM – (Dore' read the words of motions in the subject regard). (Official motion attached to minutes) DORE' HUNTER – Moved to approve. PETER ASHTON – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

DORE' HUNTER - Moved to issue Bonds \$232,394 (copies attached to Minutes). BOB JOHNSON - Moved in the words of the Motion. – PETER ASHTON, Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

BOSTON EDISON – POLE LOCATION, MAIN STREET AT THE PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY. PETER ASHTON - Moved to Approve. BOB JOHNSON – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

MARTIN STREET SIDEWALK ISSUE – Claire Siska, 14 Stow Street, read a priority list that the group has developed. They want sidewalks and pedestrian signage. They do not want the train whistle sounding returned, maintenance of sufficient parking for the train as well as further recreation resources at Jones Field. They want to discuss their concerns. They are asking that the neighborhood's needs be moved up on the sidewalk priority list to protect pedestrians.

Bruce Stamski outlined his meeting with the neighborhood, and that it went very well. They looked at the remains of the old sidewalk and the affected properties owners.

Dore' asked the Police Chief how he felt about the placement on the sidewalk plan. He would like to have sidewalks, but felt we need to keep in mind other streets and other neighborhood needs. He also spoke about the need in other locations and the placement higher on the Sidewalk list. He would not object to the moving up of this area if that is what the Board wanted.

Bob Johnson said safety in that area is critical. He suggested that we get the right of way permission and easement issues under way. Bruce said that he felt that that would not be a problem.

Peter spoke about the two inter-related subjects and we cannot solve both. He asked about cost and trade off's. Bruce Stamski noted that he has been counting cars in South Acton and at the Fire station and has counted up to 90 cars. If the parking lot was expanded by those 90 cars he feels that due to economic concerns they would still park in the free areas. He spoke about the wetlands and expansion. They need to explore this with Conservation Commission and to make a case that this would be a better situation. He feels we have the capability to make that change. It is doable but we need to present environmental impacts. Peter asked about the cost for the parking lot. For the sidewalks on Martin Street, drainage and if we do the work in house around \$33,000 and if we bid it out double that. He has not yet come up with a figure for the parking expansion. Peter asked Chief Widmayer about the ranking of the sidewalk plan and if he would support the moving up on the list. He replied he would, however he is really concerned about High Street, Main Street and other dangerous locations. He noted the two fatalities had taken place on Willow Street.

Walter supported the moving up of Martin Street on the sidewalk priority list. He suggested they look in to the CPC for funding. He felt that funds for Recreational needs would be appropriate for funding under the CPC. He also spoke about HDC and Historical needs that would also be appropriate for CPC Funding.

Dore' felt it would be unfair to vote to change the list tonight as others may have concerns.

Martin Gratz asked that the parking lot not be expanded.

Pam Fleetman noted close calls on Martin Street. She asked about police presence to deter speeders.

Christine Hanley had questions about the Assabet Rail trail, and parking concerns.

Anne Forbes wanted clarification that that the meeting with Bruce Stamski was not a Neighborhood Meeting. They still have many questions as a group.

BOB JOHNSON - Moved we move the Martin Street Sidewalk up on the Sidewalk list on the first year draft priority list. WALTER FOSTER - Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

FY06 BUDGET – Peter outlined the different budget scenarios. He spoke about the latest ALG update and uses for the \$350,000. Peter prepared different B budget scenarios. He has tried to find a balance between personnel and other items in the budgets. He has tried to take the suggested methods of cuts from the Big Four. He felt

we need to increase fees up to 25% where they are not statutorily controlled. He said we need to continue to look at efficiencies such as the back office Finance, Recreation and Community Education, and Highway with the Water District.

Dore' noted he would take the money from the Library. He felt we needed to hold the Town Engineer on board. He also suggested we take money from Finance Committee. He looked at Highway no paving and they will rely on Chapter 90 for pot holes. Recreation needs to support its self and has to pay for itself. Dore' said there is no way we can protect Police and Fire.

Don clarified that the Board want the major cuts to come from the Big Four.

Bob Johnson looked at the dismantling of Town Hall Departments. He felt it was not acceptable. Once you take out a department it is very hard to rebuild. He said that the major amounts need to come from the Big Four.

Peter said staff has been very busy developing these cuts. He assured everyone that they have looked carefully at these issues.

Dore' felt we needed to support the Senior Center and that is one service we need to preserve.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY – Representatives of Habitat for Humanity asked the Town to donate the land at 74 River Street to them for construction of an affordable home. They would be fully responsible to meet all regulations both Town and State. They would have a deed restriction to assure that it remains affordable and it would add to our housing stock. They want the Board of Selectmen to support the CPC funding at Spring Town Meeting in the amount of \$35,000.

Don said that it would need to be put out to bid and then to grant the approvals and restrictions to Habitat for Humanity.

Peter spoke about some concerns he has. He supports the project. He asked how other towns handle the donation of property. She said that Ashburnham, Groton, Ayer and Maynard have worked with them successfully. Peter and Dore' support, but could not support the Article in the Warrant due to the fiscal situation.

Don asked that they submit an article to the Town Meeting. The Board suggested they increase their CPC request for funding. PETER ASHTON - Moved to place this on the warrant. BOB JOHNSON – UNANIMOUS VOTE.,

Anne Forbes asked that the group contact the HDC to go over regulations regarding building in the District.

ACTON HOUSING AUTHORITY – Don gave an overview of the ACHC taking over the support of their committee. Betty is retiring and they don't feel they can continue to support an outside board. It is an issue that the AHA is not going to be able to support the ACHC activities. Betty's concerns about the chaos of having a new job and ACHC duties, she noted it would be very difficult to manage both. ACHC will need office space, and it is something that we may be able to work out. PETER ASHTON – Moved to

support ACHC's funding request to CPC. BOB JOHNSON – Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

FAULKNER MILL SITE PLAN SPECIAL PERMIT #09/24/04-399, 4 HIGH STREET – CONTINUED FROM 12/13/04 – The petitioner's engineer asked that the plan be continued to January 24, 2005 at 8:00.

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

Peter is representing the Walter. They are meeting with the Democratic Town Committee at 6:00 at the Continental Café on Spruce Street on the 9th, to continue the State of the State discussions. All are welcome.

CONSENT AGENDA

BOB JOHNSON – Moved to approve. – PETER ASHTON - Second. UNANIMOUS VOTE

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PETER ASHTON –Move to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Contract Negotiations, to return to regular meeting. – Second. Roll Call was taken, Hunter, Ashton, Foster (Shupert and Johnson absent) All AYES,

Christine Joyce
Recording Clerk

Clerk

Date